

Border Eagle



Vol. 47, No. 14

Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas ... Training the world's best pilots

April 16, 1999

Newsline

A glance at news affecting Laughlin

Pilot awards

The graduation awards for SUPT Class 99-07 were as follows:

Capt. Samuel N. Blunt – Flying Training Award; Distinguished Graduate; Order of Daedalians AETC Commander's Trophy.

Capt. John O. Howard – Academic Training Award.

2nd Lt. Michael A. Mundy – Daedalian Award.

2nd Lt. Timothy J. Peterson – Flying Training Award; Distinguished Graduate; Order of Daedalians AETC Commander's Trophy.

2nd Lt. Sean S. Sullivan – Academic Training Award.

Capt. William B. Thompson – Outstanding Officer.

Signal test

The base will test its weather and attack warning signals today from noon until approximately 12:30 p.m.

A three- to five-minute wavering tone is the alert warning signal that warns of an imminent attack. A three- to five-minute steady tone warns of imminent or actual peacetime disaster that threatens public safety, such as a tornado.

Banyan shut-down

The Banyan Vines-Beyond Mail service will be shut down today. Anyone who has not been migrated to the MS Exchange-Outlook mail system or is still using Beyond Mail should notify your Organization Computer Manager. If you do not know who your OCM is, contact the Network Control Center help desk at 5200.

See 'Newsline,' page 20

Monthly Flying Goal

	T-37	T-1	T-38
Goal	3732	965	1529
Remain	3155	833	1239
Delta*	+312	-102	+108

Information current as of April 7.
*Sorties ahead/ behind schedule

No kidding!

New CDC director ready to make Laughlin child care best in AETC

By 1st Lt. Angela O'Connell

Public affairs

Sherrie McDonald is the new Child Development Center director. She has 11 years of experience in the child development career field. "I have worked for Pacific Air Command, United States Air Forces Europe, Air Combat Command, Air Mobility Command, and Air Education and Training Command," McDonald said.

Her love of children and desire for new challenges brought her to Laughlin. Her experience with the major commands should benefit Laughlin's CDC. "Each (command) has its own priorities and missions, I have learned to gather from them and expand my knowledge" McDonald said.

The CDC is one of the few organizations subject to no-notice inspections. They go through four annually. The large one is a team that visits from DOD. "It is like an Operational Readiness inspection," McDonald said. The team visits for a week and gets into all of the files, interviews parents and children, and inspects all of the programs. The base conducts a similar inspection with represen-

tatives appointed by the 47th Support Group commander. These inspections are the stepping stones for the certification process.

"Our CDC is working now to gain certification for this year and once that is complete, we will begin the accreditation process," McDonald said. In addition, the center goes through annual comprehensive fire and safety inspections completed by base agencies.

The new director has many goals for the CDC. She wants to make it the best in AETC. She wants to continue making the CDC a safe, healthy, fun place for the children and the staff as well. "I want to make it so the kids are eager to come here each day," McDonald said. She is very open to sugges-



Photo by 1st Lt. Angela O'Connell

McDonald spends a few minutes playing with Austin Wakefield in the Child Development Center's infant room Tuesday.

playground equipment, re-establishing the six-week-old program, and supplementing the learning materials for the children are just a few of the things coming up for the CDC.

"I have a great staff," McDonald said. "Laughlin commanders also are very interested in the program and its success." With an outstanding staff and Laughlin's support, she is on her way to making this CDC the best in AETC.

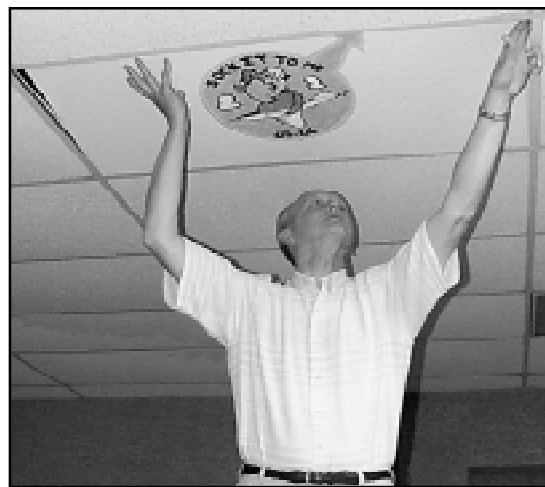


Photo by Jim Teet

I'm back!

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jerry Grabeklis puts the SUPT Class 69-06 ceiling tile into place in the Operations Group building at the class' 30-year reunion here Saturday. The UPT class graduated here April 11, 1969.

t inside h e scoop

Ace pilot speaks here ...

America's leading ace from the Vietnam conflict offers perspective on leadership, retention and more.

Page 2

Y2K test goes well ...

Air Force computers don't miss a beat April 9 during one of the first real tests of the Year 2000 bug.

Page 6

CMSAF looks back ...

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Eric W. Benken looks back at his career and his last assignment.

Page 10

President Clinton has nominated Gen. Ralph E. Eberhart for assignment as commander of Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Va. The general is currently Air Force vice chief of staff.

He will succeed Gen. Richard E. Hawley, who will retire July 1.

Commander's corner

Medics: an insider's point-of-view

By Lt. Col. Kathy S. Higgins
47th Medical Operations Squadron commander

There are many diverse opinions about the benefits of today's Air Force Medical System, the policies and priorities of which are influenced by congressional regulations and laws. Perceptions about medical benefits often stimulate controversy and sometimes, sadly, result in mistrust. But let me offer you an insider's point of view, based on 20 years of experience, about the basic ingredient of our medical system: the medic.

Multidisciplinary. The medic is not a singular entity. Rather, it is a multidisciplinary team that directs, delivers and ensures the ability, technology and process essential to providing exceptional patient care. The medic is both the person seen by patients as well as the unseen person behind the scenes who provides the means of rendering treatment.

Excellence. The medic always strives to adopt skills to deliver the best medical care possible in many extraordinarily adverse environments. During Operation Just

Cause, I saw medics learn how to perform perimeter defense, conduct weapon searches of patients and perform pararescue aircraft operations. These skills enhanced their abilities to protect the patient compound, facilitate the aeromedical evacuation of critically injured patients from unsafe areas and deliver outstanding care under field conditions. As a result, 192 critically wounded patients were treated and transported out of Panama within the first 27 hours of operations, without a single loss of life.

Dedicated. The medic is dedicated to patients no matter what the environment or personal sacrifice. I've seen medics volunteer time after time without hesitation to go where the patients are, whether it's on the Iraqi border awaiting the arrival of a rescued downed pilot, or wading through five feet of flood waters to rescue victims. I've seen a medic volunteer to be the runner among three separate bunkers to relay critical information despite personal danger from missile fire. I've known medics to do whatever it takes to safeguard and treat patients — re-

gardless of time or danger. Medics were awake for 60 hours straight during the initial hours in Operation Just Cause delivering life-saving care on an airfield targeted by enemy missile launchers before back-up relief arrived.

Innovative, versatile. The medic meets diverse environmental conditions and limited resource availability through innovation. During Operation Desert Storm, medics combined three large general-purpose tents into a single area to facilitate better observation, treatment and transport of patients. With amazing resiliency, medics built four-foot sandbag walls to protect patients from shrapnel and learned how to maintain and repair generators. This versatility enabled one staging facility to successfully move patient care activities to five separate sites within a five-month period of time during hostile operations. The last move placed them 250 miles from the nearest Air Force base and 13 miles from the Kuwait border, 24 hours before the start of ground operations.

Caring: the medic has an immeasurable capacity to care for patients.

See 'Medic,' page 8

Ace speaks to Laughlin on leadership, pilot retention

By Senior Airman
Mike Hammond
Editor

Not everyone gets the chance to meet a war hero. When Col. (Ret.) Charles B. DeBellevue appeared here as the guest speaker at the pilot graduation ceremony for Class 99-07, it was an opportunity for the people of this base to see a man whose accomplishments are nothing short of legendary.

DeBellevue is America's leading ace from the Vietnam conflict,

having six total enemy kills to his credit. He wears the Air Force Cross and the Silver Star with two oak leaf clusters, earned by his actions in combat flight in the F-4 Phantom over the skies of south-east Asia.

The colonel said that during his years of service his greatest accomplishment was making a difference in whatever he did. The way young officers and airmen can do this, he said, is by setting personal standards, recognizing the stan-

dards of the unit, command and the service, and then living up to them.

"If you come to a base and find things you don't like, give a 110-percent effort to make a change for the better," the colonel advised. "And the 110 percent is not that much extra, but then you're setting the example for those who come after you. Pretty soon the base is that much better than it was when you arrived — and the improvement was completely free! All it took was some effort."

See 'Ace,' page 8

People First:

Competitive sourcing, privatization unit maps way

In today's Air Force, competitive sourcing and privatization is needed to free up critical funds for commanders to meet future challenges as the service's missions evolve.

CS&P has been in place for years; however, many people do not understand the process. In keeping with the Air Force tradition of taking care of its own, the deputy chief of staff for personnel established a CS&P office in May 1998 to serve as the focal point for issues related to CS&P and to help Air Force people better navigate through the process.

Since opening its doors, the CS&P office has made great strides in helping military and civilian people prepare for future competitive sourcing studies. Their efforts include a "Handbook for Civilian Personnel on Competitive Sourcing and Privatization" and development of a CS&P course for Air Force personnel specialists.

The CS&P staff realizes how stressful consideration for competitive sourcing can be for Air Force people. One of their goals is to make the process less taxing through education by providing personnel flights with information about the process. In addition, the staff has daily contact with major commands and functional experts who are considering competitive sourcing studies, to make sure personnel implications of studies are considered.

Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel Lt. Gen. Donald L. Peterson is dedicated to ensuring the Air Force finds the right mix of military, civilian and contract workers to sustain the world's finest air and space force into the new millennium.

(AFNS)

Actionline

Call 298-5351

when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the *Border Eagle*. Before you call the Actionline, please try to work the problem out through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved.

Thanks for your cooperation and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

Dan R. Goodrich
Col. Dan R. Goodrich

47th Flying Training Wing commander



AAFES	298-3176
Accounting and Finance	298-5204
Civil Engineer	298-5252
Civilian Personnel	298-5299
Commissary	298-5815
Dormitory manager	298-5213
Hospital	298-6311
Housing	298-5904
Inspector General	298-5638
Legal	298-5172
Military Personnel	298-5073
Public Affairs	298-5988
Security Forces	298-5900
Services	298-5810
Social Actions	298-5400
FWA hotline	298-4170

Border Eagle

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Deadlines, Advertising

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, Ext. 5262. **Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.** Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday. Submissions can be E-mailed to: michael.hammond@laughlin.af.mil or reginald.woodruff@laughlin.af.mil

***“Excellence –
not our goal, but
our standard.”***

– 47 FTW motto

Safety Stats

As of April 13
(Fiscal Year)

	'99	Total '98
On-duty mishaps	1	11
Off-duty mishaps	7	7
Traffic mishaps	1	4
Sports & Rec mishaps	5	3
Fatalities	0	2

Y2K: is your nest egg safe?

WASHINGTON – Will the Year 2000 computer problem have federal employees' Thrift Savings Plan nest egg for lunch?

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, which administers the TSP, and fund managers say no. The plan's current systems will recognize the year change correctly, officials said.

The Year 2000 problem, nicknamed “Y2K,” refers to a past computer industry practice of writing years with just two digits – 1999 would be “99.” Because of this digital shorthand, some computer systems on Jan. 1, 2000, might treat “00” as “1900” or just shut down. A computer system that recognizes the year 2000 correctly is called “compliant.”

The National Finance Center, which currently keeps TSP records, has certified that the existing system is Y2K-compliant.

A “windowing” technique was used to identify and modify all dates in the current system. All dates of birth were assumed to be 19xx. Because the system contains no transaction dates earlier than Jan. 1, 1984, all such dates from then through Dec. 31, 1999, are assumed to be “19xx.” Transactions with two-digit year dates that seem earlier than 1984, such as “00,” are assumed to be 20xx.

The investment board has contracted with American Management Systems Inc. to develop a new record-keeping system for maintaining TSP accounts. One of the requirements

Thirsty?

An F-15C Eagle from the 493rd Expeditionary Squadron, 48th Fighter Wing, Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, pulls in behind a 100th Air Expeditionary Wing KC-135R Stratotanker from RAF Mildenhall, England. The F-15C Eagle is currently deployed to Cervia Air Base, Italy. Armed with AIM-7 Sparrows on the fuselage, AIM-9 Sidewinders on the inboard wing pylon and Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles on the outboard wing pylon, the Eagles are flying in support of NATO's Operation Allied Force.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Brad Fallin

(AFPN)

is to ensure that dates in the year 2000 and beyond will be accommodated. When the new system is completed and online in mid-2000, it will only accept four-digit dates.

Neither the board nor fund managers anticipate any disruption of services under ei-

ther the old or new systems. Look for Year 2000 updates in the semiannual TSP Highlights newsletter, in the Plan News on the ThriftLine (504-255-8777) and on the TSP web site.

(AFPN)

Medical service completes tailored force strategy

BOLLING AIR FORCE BASE, D.C. – The Air Force Medical Service will finish tailoring its force by the end of fiscal 2000.

The tailored force strategy began in fiscal 1989, in part to achieve a 17.9 percent reduction in medical manpower as compared to an overall Air Force manpower cutback of 35 percent. Rather than take an “across the board” reduction, the medical service developed a plan to tailor its forces to ensure decreases were made in appropriate areas. In this way, the service would continue to meet wartime and peacetime needs.

The strategy is being executed in phases. The medical service changed many of its smaller hospitals to clinics and converted several larger hospitals to smaller, more efficient facilities. Reductions and realignments have already occurred at these locations.

Now the strategy will focus on re-engineering Air Force medical centers. Tailoring will occur at Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB, Texas; Keesler Medical Center, Keesler AFB, Miss.; and Wright-Patterson Medical Center, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. The David Grant Medical Center, Travis AFB, Calif., has already begun its tailoring process.

The revised force structure supports a strategy designed to optimize use of medical resources – people, facilities and money. At the same time, the Air Force surgeon general said the changes will improve the quality of health care delivered to the military family. The goal is to ensure each base hospital or clinic has the right mix of providers and staff at the right place and time to meet patients' needs. Many of those decisions will be made at the local level.

Through this strategy, the medical service has already completed many of its re-engineering efforts. These include eliminating some underused services, converting some medical treatment facilities from inpatient to outpatient facilities and increasing or decreasing numbers of medical people to better serve population needs.

“These changes are necessary to ensure that the Air Force medical service continues to provide reasonable access to a quality, cost-effective health care benefit,” said Lt. Gen. Charles Roadman, Air Force surgeon general. “In fact, this type of re-engineering is occurring throughout the health care industry in both public and private sectors. This responds to technological advances, the shift from inpatient to outpatient care and the rising cost of health care,” Roadman said.

“The medical service had a large number of inpatient facilities operating far below capacity, many with an average of less than 10 patients per day,” he said. “Continuing to operate underutilized facilities eventually impacts

the skills of Air Force providers and, ultimately, the quality of care.

“Similar to a pilot's utilization rate, providers practicing in a challenging clinical setting keeps them proficient. The medical service tailored-force strategy converts many of these inefficient, small inpatient facilities to outpatient care, freeing up precious resources to improve access to primary care,” Roadman said.

When services cannot be provided efficiently through the medical treatment facility, TRICARE partnerships with the civilian

See ‘Tailor,’ page 6

“The medical service is dedicated to maintaining the finest professional work force, the best quality of care and truly satisfied customers. That's our bottom line.”

– Lt. Gen. Charles Roadman
Air Force surgeon general

The *XL*er



Julie Willis

47th Civil Engineering Squadron

Hometown: Mesa, Ariz.
Family: Jason (spouse), Zoe and Yeager (dogs).
Time at Laughlin: 10 months.
Time in service: 11 months.
Why did you join the Air Force Family? When you marry an Air Force member you join the family.
Name one way to improve life at Laughlin or in the Air Force: Finding happiness and opportunity wherever the Air Force sends you is the right attitude. Or as my Mom would say, if you don't like where you are, change what you like.
Greatest accomplishment: Working on a reclamation project at one of the largest mine tailing impoundment failures in the United States.
Long-term goals: Continue to find career opportunities and eventually have family beyond furry babies.
Motto: Life is full of opportunities, cleverly disguised as insoluble problems.
Hobbies: Running, Tae-Bo, reading and spending time with my family.

Bad habit: Procrastination at tax time.
If you could spend one hour with any person in history, who would it be and why? My great grandfather because I would like to know his struggles when he was forced to leave Finland and immigrate to the United States.

If you were wing commander for one day, what would you do?



“I would move the base to a bigger city.”

**Airman 1st Class
Federico Aguinaga**
*47th Civil Engineering Squadron
Engineering Specialist*



“I would go out and encourage all base personnel to further their education because it is so important for their present, past and future.”

C. Eddie Adams
*47th Mission Support Squadron
Chief, Education Service Flight*



“I would of course think of my people and declare this a day of fun and getting to know you day. Have a picnic and try to meet every one who works for me. (Of course, the supervisors could stay back and do their jobs while they have a good time. Just kidding”)

Mary Lynde
*47th Flying Training Wing
Civilian Pay Technician*



“I would make available to the enlisted corps more motivational/morale incentives such as simulator rides and possible incentive flights to allow enlisted memebers to experience what students and instructor pilots go through day-to-day.”

Staff Sgt. Joseph Turner
*47th Mission Support Squadron
NCOIC, Outbound Assignments*

Air Force computers pass Y2K milestone test April 9

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. – April 9 arrived, and Air Force computers never missed a beat. One of the first tests of the year 2000 bug proved to be a big “non-event,” according to Jim Neighbors, chief of the year 2000 management office at the Air Force Communications Agency here.

April 9 was a key date because it is the 99th day of 1999 on the Julian-based calendar. A Julian calendar measures every

day in the year and accumulates them without Gregorian month boundaries. Thus, April 9, 1999, would appear as “9999” in some systems.

There was concern that some systems might incorrectly interpret the alignment of 9999 to indicate an end-of-file marker and cause disruptions. “The Air Force celebrated its first Y2K success when all systems continued to operate normally after the rollover to April 9,” Neighbors said.

In preparation for the rollover, units throughout the world were notified to increase their awareness and review their year 2000 continuity of operations plans.

In addition, organizations such as the Air Force Year 2000 Program Office and U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., ran 24-hour Y2K help desks. These monitored critical systems and key communications nodes in the Pacific and Europe as the clock advanced around the

world.

To date, more than 94 percent of Air Force mission-critical systems have been renovated and tested. Systems are undergoing additional testing in operational evaluations designed to test mission-related scenarios.

During the April 8-9 rollover, according to Neighbors, experts tested or monitored several critical systems using Julian dates and found no errors.

(AFPN)

‘Tailor,’ from page 3

community complete the health care package.

Roadman emphasized that “health care is a process, not a place. This strategy will ensure the process is the best possible for our people, both in quality and cost. “The medical service is dedicated to maintaining the finest professional work force, the best quality of care and truly satisfied customers. That’s our bottom line.”

(AFPN)

AETC, Laughlin celebrate Earth Day

Air Education and Training Command bases join communities around the world Thursday in celebrating Earth Day to promote environmental awareness.

A concept that began 29 years ago, Earth Day has grown into an international event with more than 200 million people participating in preservation and conservation activities. AETC has participated in the annual event since the early 1980s.

“As our programs continue to grow, so does the significance of this day,” said Col. Pat Fink, chief of the AETC Environmental Division. “Earth Day is a celebration of the environment intended to remind us of our responsibility to preserve our natural resources. I encourage everyone to join in and do their part for a cleaner, greener planet.”

Laughlin began its promotion of Earth Day Wednesday with a “Children’s Flea Market.” Children traded their used toys with other children, encouraging them to recycle and reuse. Packages of Earth Day items were distributed to family members at the event.

The 47th Civil Engineering Squadron Environmental Flight and 47th Services Division Outdoor Recreation will have Earth Day activity booths educating children on recycling and conservation.

Those who live on base or nearby can take an active role in reducing car emissions by bicycling to work in honor of Earth Day. To participate, bike to the Officer’s Training Complex parking lot between 6:30 and 7:45 a.m. Cyclists will be recognized in a subsequent issue of the Border Eagle.

Win your commander’s parking spot for a day! Many commanders here have

generously offered their parking spots to the members of their squadron who *safely and le-*

gally drive to work with the largest number of their co-workers. Between 6:30 and 7:45 a.m., judges will be counting car-loads and taking participant information at the West Gate. Winners will be notified by 4:30 p.m., and will be allowed to use “their” new parking space from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. April 23.

Another contest will be the “Great Balls of Foil” competition. Have your squadron bring in all its used foil and create the largest ball you can. Then call 4298, and a judge will view your ball between 10 and 11 a.m. The squadron with the largest ball will win a prize.

Join the Youth Center in its efforts to help clean up the streets

of Del Rio. Students will be going to an area on North Bedell Ave. to collect trash after school on Earth Day. If you would like to help, contact Karen Cook at 298-4363.

Earth Day will also feature a “Dirty Sock” competition. Far from a footwear inspection, this lunch-hour contest is for your car emissions. Come to the Auto Skills Center parking lot to see how clean your car really is. From

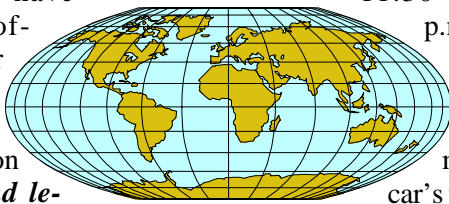
11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., judges will use a clean white sock to determine how much dirt your car’s tailpipe emits in

30 seconds. Prizes will be given to the cleanest and dirtiest socks. The Auto Skills Center is offering a front-alignment service (free labor; parts extra) as a prize.

A re-dedication of the tree dedicated to the memory of Kevin R. Jordan will be held outside the Child Development Center at 2 p.m. At this time, a commemorative plaque will be placed in front of the tree.

Other activities include a recyclable artistic sculpture contest, and a conservation and recycling booth at the base library.

(Courtesy, AETC News Service and the 47th Civil Engineering Squadron, Environmental Flight)



‘Ace,’ from page 2

DeBellevue retired in January 1998 after 30 years of service. After initially relaxing and enjoying the retired life, he found work at an electronics company that builds boxes for NASA satellites as well as working on a consolidated engine-fuel display for the F-18E.

As a retired ace, DeBellevue reflected his thoughts on today’s young pilots starting their careers in a time when the country increasingly relies on air power to achieve its objectives. “They’re (pilots) crucial to any operation,” he said. “And whether they’re flying fighters, bombers or transports they’re going to be crucial. If they don’t do their job well ... ‘For want of a nail, the kingdom is lost.’ As a pilot, you may be a small piece of the puzzle. But when you do your job right, you become a big piece of the picture.”

The colonel said the very things that mean success in the military are key to operating in the civilian sector as well. “Teamwork means a lot on the outside,” he said. “Leadership – leading by example – is key, and you must have a focus. Integrity, ethics and discipline – the things the military teaches – will take you far both during and after your career.”

DeBellevue observed that today there are a lot of pilots getting out of the military. He pointed out that service to the country should remain a factor to consider.

“Flying for the military, committing yourself to this country, doesn’t come cheap,” he said. “The costs are the same today as they were when I was going through. You’ve got to want it. You’ve got to realize that this is a higher calling. Young pilots, just starting out, need to realize that this is a great life. I guarantee it.”

**Deadline for Border Eagle submissions
is Thursday the week prior to the date of publication.**

‘Medic,’ from page 2

I’ve known medics who sat with fatally wounded soldiers, trapped victims of disasters and dying infants, powerless to cure or rescue them but choosing to stay and offer comfort and comradeship until they died.

I’ve seen medics choose to become involved emotionally, supporting patients and families who’ve had to make difficult decisions about dying even when it would have been so much easier to relinquish this heavy responsibility.

I’ve seen medics tell patients the most dismal news

in a most caring fashion. And most importantly, it’s the medic who always asks first and foremost “is it best for my patient,” before arriving at any solution to budgetary or manpower reductions.

During my time in the AFMS, I’ve had the opportunity to see the respect and high regard the medic is given by soldiers, marines, airmen, sailors and civilians involved in disaster and hostile environments. It is during tumultuous times, both in peace and war, that the above-listed characteristics of the medic instill an unforgettable trust from those in most need of patient care.

A phone scam can let criminals make charges on your long-distance bill unless you ...



Call their bluff

The telephone rings. You answer and a voice on the other end says, “I’m a service technician with AT&T, and I’m testing your telephone line. To complete this test, you need to dial (*a certain combination of numbers*) and hang up.” What do you do?

Whatever else you might think, do NOT dial any numbers to cooperate. Special Agent John E. Gill, Jr., of the Laughlin Office of Special Investigations, warns that this could be a scam to gain access

to your telephone service, and you would be charged for this access. This scam is going on throughout the U.S., although no local problems have been reported yet.

Protect yourself! If anyone tries to obtain your personal account information, be suspicious. Every legitimate business involved with your accounts already has the information they need, whether it concerns credit cards, telephone service or bank accounts. If someone tries to obtain access to or veri-

fication about your accounts, ask the name of their business and their supervisor’s name and phone number. Then call your business’ customer service section and pass this information to them.

If you don’t know whom to contact, tell the caller to put the request in writing on company letterhead and mail it to you. Then take the correspondence directly to the bank or business and resolve the matter in person.

(Courtesy, AFOSI)

Chapel Schedule

Catholic

- Daily Mass 12:05 p.m.
- Saturday Mass 5 p.m.
- Sunday Mass 9:30 a.m.
- Confession 4:15 - 4:45 p.m.
- Saturday or by appointment.
- Choir 6 p.m. Thursdays.
- Sunday school, 11 a.m., religious education building.

Protestant

- General worship 11 a.m.

- Bible study video luncheon 11 a.m. Thursday, chapel fellowship hall.
- Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., religious education building.
- Awana, Wednesdays, chapel from 6 - 7:30 p.m.

Jewish

- Max Stool
- 219 West Strickland St.
- Del Rio, Texas
- Phone: 775-4519

For more information on chapel events and services, call 5111.

‘The Chief’ looks back on 29 years of enlisted service

By Senior Master Sgt.
Jim Katzaman

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON – He only had to say the word to stay in his job two more years. Instead, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Eric W. Benken will say goodbye Oct. 31 to the service and the hundreds of thousands of airmen he has represented for the last three years.

With more than 29 years in the military – the last six of which he often spent on the road as top enlisted person for either a numbered air force, major command or the Air Force – the chief decided it was time to let someone else take a turn.

“My wife, Johnne, and I are looking forward to spending a little more time together,” the chief said, “and we have an 8-year-old daughter who might look forward to spending more time with me.”

Home offers a respite from the limelight, where every word is scoured for nuance, especially on hot-button issues such as pay and benefits, which remind the chief of some of his disappointments and successes during his term.

“While we have the absolute best Air Force in the world,” he said, “we have to struggle with our nation to ensure we remain that way – the defense budget has not supported our military as it has changed from the Cold War to become expeditionary. We now see some change to that, but it’s unfortunate that it takes

such effort to convince the American people that we still need a strong defense.”

The chief takes heart in the recent focus on readiness in Congress, noting that the lawmakers seem ready to eliminate the unfairness of multiple military retirement systems.

Even though the latest congressional commission has tentatively endorsed gender-integrated training, Benken contended that men and women training side by side should no longer be an issue.

“We prove every day that our United States Air Force, which has 99.4 percent of its career paths open to men and women, is trained the right way at Lackland (Air Force Base, Texas). To the naysayers I say, ‘show me where we are not getting the work done for America; show me this ‘failure’ you predict for our forces.’ It’s just not true.”

Getting out the truth proved to be a challenge early in the chief’s term. The problem, he discovered, stemmed from failure to communicate. Information posted and passed along through the Internet, he said, was often distorted.

He and his staff counterattacked by setting up the chief master sergeant of the Air Force home page at <http://www.af.mil/lib/cmsaf/>. Through this site, the chief’s office replies to 100 messages a day from the field. This also gives the chief a cen-

tral point to send up-to-date information quickly throughout the force.

This forum, he said, gave him the chance to address some of the hottest topics on airmen’s minds: retirement and medical care.

The latter, the chief said, is a serious concern for Air Force families. What was once presented as permanent, free health care has evolved into a health maintenance organization that leaves those aged 65 and older wanting for help. The chief said Congress needs to fix this oversight.

“The end of the Cold War threw us some changes that we had to adapt to,” he said, “and one of them was how we deliver health care. We closed some 243 installations in the Department of Defense and had about a 43-percent drop in infrastructure.

“At the same time, our demographics changed,” he said. “We’re no longer mostly single; we’re now mostly married. Nine million people are eligible for (care at) a military treatment facility. We can’t stuff 9 million people into a 43-percent drop in infrastructure. You have to change the way you deliver the benefit, and that’s what TRICARE does.”

As top enlisted person in the Air Force, the chief found that it goes “far beyond the nuts and bolts of signing off on paperwork. It’s the cultural develop-

ment of our Air Force. It’s working the intangibles such as guiding and leading the force, making sure that aspect of it works. It’s focusing the force on getting back to basics and fundamental discipline, which I see as the foundation for a strong military. It’s setting the force up for success as we go into the next century and become an expeditionary aerospace force.”

Benken added that command chief master sergeants and first sergeants “are doing a great job in setting us up for success in 2000 and beyond. We are focusing on the expeditionary aerospace force, making sure our troops know how to deploy. The Warrior Week expansion at basic training and the focus on first sergeants being the key to readiness and deployments will go a long way in helping us make the transition.”

He said he is particularly proud of today’s corps of senior noncommissioned officers.

“They have taken on the professional development of our mid-level NCOs through professional development seminars throughout the Air Force. As senior NCOs, the responsibility for their development rests squarely on our shoulders. We

must take on the role of recruiters, career advisers and mentors. We are doing a much better job of that, and we must

continue to do so.”

The chief also paid tribute to Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael E. Ryan and Acting Secretary of the Air Force Whit Peters.

“They are addressing every issue –

from operations tempo to retirement – with tremendous focus,” Benken said. “By tearing down Cold War paradigms and reorganizing our force to do expeditionary-style missions, they are setting our force up for success as we enter the next century.”

All told, Benken said the rewards have been well worth the effort.

“It’s been 29 years of working with the most fantastic people in the world, 29 years of seeing people reach way beyond what you’d expect them to be able to do,” he said. “I saw superb leadership under some very, very tough conditions and saw our troops respond by doing magnificent things for our Air Force and our nation.

“I feel very fortunate to have been able to wear the uniform in serving my country and would do it all over again in a heartbeat.”

“It’s been 29 years of working with the most fantastic people in the world, 29 years of seeing people reach way beyond what you’d expect them to be able to do.”

– Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Eric Benken





Photo by Staff Sgt. Reginal Woodruff

Heading for home

Brandon Every scores a valuable run for the Laughlin Astros in base minor league action Tuesday. The Astros held off a last inning rush by the Laughlin Reds and squeezed out a 10 - 9 win.

Sports shorts

Bike rally

The XL Fitness Center is sponsoring a mountain bike rally April 24 starting at the fitness center. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and the rally follows at 9 a.m.

Call 5251 or 5326 for more details.

Bowling specials

All Air Force bowling centers including Cactus Lanes are kicking off a year of special bowling promotions by celebrating "Month of the Military Child" with special activities:

■ Children can bowl free from 1 - 4 p.m. April 24 when their parents bowl.

■ Teen Cosmic Special with Rock 300 will be held April 30 - Teen Center members bowl for half price.

Stop by the bowling center to find out about other special events.

7-mile run

The XL Fitness Center sponsored a 7-mile run April 10. Nine people participated in the event.

Roberto Espinozo finished first among men in 48 minutes, 46 seconds.

Nancy Irwin was the first woman to cross the finish line, with a time of 56 minutes, 4 seconds.

It was noted in a survey that more water stations were needed along the run course; the fitness center is addressing this issue and others to improve future events.

Intramural Bowling

Standings:

SVS	133	63
SFS	126	70
OSS	118	78
COMM	101.5	94.5
SIM	98.5	97.5
MSS	80	116
CES	65	131
MDG	62	134

Schedule for 22 Apr:

Lanes 1-2	SFS	vs	OSS
Lanes 3-4	SVS	vs	SIM
Lanes 5-6	COMM	vs	MSS
Lanes 7-8	CES	vs	MDG

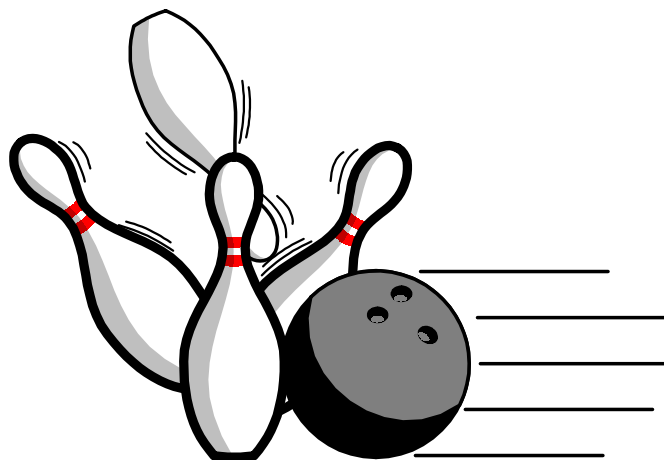




Photo by Steve Miller

Crash critics

Maj. Alan Shafer, chief, wing flight safety and Tech. Sgt. Christopher Clause, 47th Civil Engineering Squadron, discuss events surrounding a simulated T-38 crash during Exercise Scarlet Hawk. As Exercise Evaluation Team members, Shafer and Clause were responsible for observing the how base personnel responded to the crash.

Grand Opening

The Shoppette will have a Grand Opening Ceremony at 10 a.m. Tuesday. There will be cake, punch, specials and giveaways.

Col. Dan R. Goodrich, 47th Flying Training Wing commander, James Moon, Army Air Force Exchange Service manager – San Antonio area, and Christine Woodward, AAFES general manager – Fort Sam Houston, will cut the ribbon.

Everyone is welcome to join the festivities.

Quarterly awards luncheon

The quarterly awards luncheon will be held April 26 at Club XL. Tickets are now on sale. All nominees and squadron commanders, please RSVP to 6347. All others interested in attending should contact the appropriate first sergeant to sign up. The last day to purchase tickets is Wednesday.

If you have any questions, call 4320.

Lifeguard course

American Red Cross has released the schedule for the Lifeguard Course. Prerequisite testing will be held April 24th beginning at 9:00 a.m., at the Buena Vista Pool.

Classes begin 5 - 9 p.m. April 26 at the Civic Center. This is a 27-hour course that will end May 8th. A schedule will be given to each student at the first class.

The \$100 course fee needs to be paid at the time of passing prerequisites.

Blood drive

The American Red Cross will hold a blood drive 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. April 27 at the Fiesta Center. Each donor will receive a free buffet from Mr. Gatti's.

Anyone 17 - 72 years of age, who weights at least 110 pounds and is in good health may donate blood. All blood donors will receive a free cholesterol test and mini-physical. All donors are asked to present some form of identification.

For further information, contact Jane Pratt at the ARC at 775-8626.

Top wheels

The winners of the 47th Support Group's Quarterly "Top Wheels" competition were:

- 47th Operations Group, aircraft maintenance, in the General Purpose category,
- 47th Support Group, fuels management, in the Special Purpose category.

Bingo

The Laughlin Officers' Spouses' Club will have its traditional Silver/Crystal Bingo Evening at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Club XL. Elections for next year's board will also be held at the event.

Reservations can be made by calling 298-2525 by Monday.

If you have any questions, please call 298-3740.

Club membership scholarship

Air Force Services is conducting the Third Annual Club Membership Scholarship Program. Current Air Force officers, enlisted, consolidated and collocated club members and their family members are eligible to apply for scholarships. Three scholarships will be awarded – first prize is \$5,000; second is \$3,000; third is \$2,000.

Services will award scholarship prizes by Oct. 1. Nominations must include the sponsor's name, last nine digits of their club card number, base, club name and the nominee's full name with mailing address and phone number. If the nominee is someone other than the club member, state his or her relationship to the member. Nominees must also provide an essay and a summary of their accomplishments and career goals.

For more information, call DSN 487-6312/2353.

AFROTC Briefing

Representatives from AFROTC Det 847, Angelo State University, San Angelo, Texas, will visit Laughlin Thursday at 1 p.m. They will provide information on the Air Force ROTC program and Angelo State University. Prior-enlisted AFROTC cadets will be available to answer your questions. The briefing will be held in the Education Office.

For more information, call the Education Services

Flight at 5545 or 4673.

Blue Cross

Belinda Reyes, Federal Employee Program Account Representative, will be here Tuesday for questions and concerns regarding Blue Cross/Blue Shield benefits.

Call the Civilian Personnel Flight at 298-5806 to make an appointment.

Office closure

The HAZMAT Office will be closed Monday - Wednesday due to training. Regular office hours will resume Thursday.

Black Heritage Committee award

The Laughlin Air Force Base Black Heritage Committee has awarded a \$500 scholarship to Airman 1st Class Bruce A. Markman, 47th Contracting Squadron. A check was presented to Park College, where Markman is pursuing a four-year degree in management.

This is the second year the BHC has awarded scholarships to people on base.

If anyone is interested in joining the BHC to help others "XL," contact Joni Jordan at 5914.

Veterinarian is in

The veterinarian will be here today. The Vet Clinic is in Building 25, across from the contracting office. It is rabies season so your pet may need a shot or a regular checkup.

Your pet must be registered to be seen at the clinic.

Call Helena Morrison at 5500, 8 a.m. - noon to make an appointment or register your pet.

Youth camp

Laughlin's St. Francis of Assisi Catholic community will hold their weekend youth camp May 21 - 23 at the H.E.B. Foundation campgrounds near Leakey, Texas. The cost of attending the camp is \$35.

Sign-up has started and will end Monday. Payment is due at sign-up.

Call Leslee Eastwood at 5111.

New pharmacy hours

An evaluation of the demand for prescriptions between 7 - 7:30 a.m. has revealed that the number of prescriptions filled during these times does not reflect efficient utilization of staffing.

In view of this, and current and projected staffing decreases, the clinic has made the following changes to its pharmacy hours:

Monday - Tuesday: 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday - Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

For questions concerning the pharmacy, call Capt. Deryck Hill at 6451.

Scholarships

The Xi Phi Sorority has two \$250 college scholarships available. Applicants can get applications at South West Texas Junior College or Sul Ross University financial aid offices. The deadline for submissions is April 30.

Call 774-3977 for more information.